have endeavoured also to have economists although—I do not have the figures off-hand—there is no special category contemplated in the clause which I have mentioned for economists as such. But we have endeavoured because they come under the category of people who have knowledge useful for the working of nationalised banks.

[illegible]

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Yes, Sir. Representatives of farmers will be there. As far as working of the banks as such is concerned...

[illegible]

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: As far as working of the banks is concerned, that is monitored and monitored regularly by the Reserve Bank of India. And representatives of farmers will be there.

DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: I would like to know whether the Government seeks police verification before appointing them as directors so that some shady personalities may not enter into the boards of directors of the banks.

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: We will see that shady personalities as the Member calls them are not included. We will make a thorough check of them from all the agencies.

DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: What about police clearance?

SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: We will take not merely the clearance of the police which may not be the best thing, but we will take the clearance of the agencies like the Revenue Intelligence and other agencies which deal with these things.

DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will you at least take the clearance of the State Government?

MR. CHAIRMA: Yes, Mr. Gautam.

[illegible]

MR. CHAIRMAN: He is asking about representation of the Scheduled Caste people.

[illegible] Sir, though the clause does not mention anything to give representation to the Scheduled Caste, in view of the policy of this Government to give representations to these communities in all spheres of the Government, I would say, "Yes, Sir. We will endeavour to have representation of the Scheduled Castes in all the Board.".

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No 345.

Long term policy on tea

*345. SHRI RATNA BAHADUR RAI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Committee constituted by Government to formulate long-term policy on tea has submitted its report;

(b) if so, what are the recommendations of the Committee; and

(c) what action Government have taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The main recommendations of the Committee are as follows:—

—to evolve a National Tea Policy;

—to set up a Standing Forum for Policy Planning and Co-ordination for tea;

—to set up a Centre for Studies in Plantation management system;

—to devise policies and programmes for [illegible] of the [illegible] growing [illegible]

—[illegible] and [illegible] for [illegible] yields as one of the medium-term remedies;

[illegible] Replanting Fund;

[illegible] time bound [illegible] programme of extension planting through [illegible] financial backing with attractive incentive packages;

—extension of tea in degraded forest land;

—growing of tea in non-traditional areas for progressive increase in production of tea;

—revision of assistance packages after every three years by the Tea Board and the financial institutions;

—programmed development of small growers sector;

—to strengthen the R & D activities;

—constitution of Regional Advisory Committees for the purpose of planning and development of the industry in the region concerned;

—region-wise manpower studies be initiated to make an objective assessment of the perspective on supply side vis-a-vis the projected requirements;

—institutionalised forum for centre-state co-ordination;

—review of role of the Tea Board in line with the future requirements of development;

—to evolve a plan and strategy for increasing export volumes, export earnings and for effecting substantial increasing in value added exports.

(c) Government is yet to examine the Report, as it has been received only recently.

SHRI RATNA LAKHDUR RAI: Sir, [illegible] in his reply that the Government is [illegible] the Recommendations [illegible] that the Government has [illegible] report [illegible] Minister [illegible] recommendations will [illegible] and, consequently, [illegible] with consider the question of the [illegible] price of tea in future, in view the increasing domestic consumption.

SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI: Sir, I am grateful to the honourable Member for the compliments that he has paid to the Ministry for appointing this Committee to formulate long-term policies and to make recommendations in that direction. I would like to inform the honourable Member that the recommendations are in this Report which is a voluminous Report dealing with all aspects of production, productivity, modern methods, research and so on. So, it will take much more time to consider the whole thing. So, unless we examine it in detail, we cannot, at the moment, say which are the parts which we will accept and which are the parts which we will not be able to accept. Insofar as the matter that was referred to by the honourable Member regarding sick units

is concerned, there is no decision as such. But it is a fact that going beyond the parameters of the long-term proposals, very recenly, last month I had asked the Chairman of the Tea Board to prepare a report on the situation to find out whether the sick units, closed down units, can be improved, whether their capacity can be improved and whether they can be revived with help by the financial institutions to revive and reopen them. Unless we receive this report we cannot say anything now. Even after receiving the report, we will have to contact the other Ministries.

So far as price is concerned, we are concerned about the growing price of tea in the market. At the instance of the Commerce Minister, I have asked for a market survey report and have convened a meeting and I am glad to inform the House that the members of the tea trade themselves have agreed and have started a popular brand tea which would be sold within the range of forty rupees per kg. There is one thing here. We are not the nodal Ministry to monitor it. The State Governments, the Enforcement Departments and the Civil Supplies Departments are concerned with this and they are monitoring this. But the tea trade has responded to our call.

SHRI RATNA BAHADUR RAI: I would like to know whether the Government can spell out any time-limit for the examination of the recommendations of this Committee.

SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSHI: At the moment, I cannot specify any time-limit We are very much concerned about the tea industry and in the interest of the country's economy and trade, we will look into the matter very shortly and instruct the Department to examine it as quickly as possible.

*346. [The questioner (Shri Ram Jethmalani) was absent. For answer vide col 33-34 infra].

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 347.

Delay in clearance of cheques in Delhi banks

*347. SHRI ANAND PRAKASH GAUTAM: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the deficulties being faced by the public on account of undue delay in the clearance of their cheques as a result of the observance of weekly offs on different dates by the bank branches in different localities of Delhi; and

(b) if so, whether Government propose to switch over to the old system of observing uniform weakly off on Sunday for all the banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) and (b) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

In some areas of Delhi, markets are observing weekly off on a day other than Sunday. Bank branches in these areas have also adjusted, in larger customer interest, their closing day accordingly. Keeping in view the overall benefits to the clients, no change is proposed for the present in the existing system.

MR. CHAIRMAIN: Question Hour is over.